

Address by Miss Ida M. Tarbell at Silver Anniversary Dinner, Jan. 3, 1936

I do not know how one is going to respond to such a handsome introduction as that given by Dr. Faulkner. I do not recognize myself. I am here in a very humble mood. I came because I have realized that I belong in a league for the hard of hearing. I am just in the first stages of it. I discovered a couple of years ago that I was cupping my ear. I discovered that I sometimes was sitting around silent and looking wise because I did not hear. Dullness of hearing has not been the only occasion for using that technique. Sometimes it has been a dullness of understanding. This fact that I was beginning to feel that I was a nuisance to my family, and they did not spare me, made me have a great interest in an organization such as yours and made me take the bull by the horns and do something about it. I found that there were two or three ways of looking at it. The first was the gloomy way. Most of my friends assured me that it was an affliction and was hopeless. I never take much interest in that kind of handling of problems. I realized that there might be a protection in this impaired hearing such as Dr. Faulkner has been referring to. You might save yourself from a good many nuisances, you would have no trouble about noise. It was not as an affliction that I was interested in the hard of hearing. I was interested in it as one of those handicaps which is a challenge to both intelligence and character to bestir yourself to see if anything can be done to equalize and to compensate. This League has nobly and finely solved that problem. It has bestirred itself. The way you use the knowledge and experience from the past in order to meet the defect of impaired hearing ~~and~~ is heartening. You know all about the mechanical types of hearing of which there are many. One of these days I may be using one and I hope I will wear it with as much grace as you people do. They are very

attractive and like the little black patches the ladies used to wear on their faces. I am looking forward to that time.

A very beautiful thing to me is that so many of you excel in the fine art of reading the lips. It is one of the most beautiful of human arts. That admiration was born of a delightful acquaintance many years ago, a woman whom you all know, Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell. She is a wonderful example of what can be done with a double affliction of deafness. She was the wife of the inventor of the telephone and you know her story of how Mr. Bell came here from England and was called in to see what he could do for Mable Hubbard who was deaf. Mrs. Bell was a mistress of the art of lip reading. To me she was a delightful study. I have seen her at a table of 25 or more and she did not miss a single story or comment. She had two daughters who had learned to repeat noiselessly to her remarks that she missed when not looking at a person. It made me feel that the art of the reading of lips was one of the loveliest that I knew. As a matter of fact we make very little of the ~~beauty~~ beauty of the lips. I wish we could persuade women that there is much more beauty in the use of the lips than in the use of the lipstick. The lips respond to every emotion and thought.

You are making a great contribution to the country. Something else you do interests me very much. You are developing your own social and economic technique and that is a great thing for a handicapped group. You are developing a scientific technique which cannot but be an example to all other handicapped groups. Each group has its own special social and economic problems and to find some way to handle them so that you belong to that great army of those who will not be conquered is the most wonderful thing in the world. This army depends upon intelligence and character and is the only

thing that works out in the long run. You have character and intelligence combined.

Thank you.